

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend Claim 20 as indicated.

Please add new Claims 22-27 as indicated.

Claims 1-19: (Cancelled).

Claim 20: (Currently Amended):

A clothing strap tensioning device, comprising:

an elastic member having a geometry generally defined by substantially coplanar middle, left end, and right end portions; and wherein the elastic member defines a boundary having upper, lower, left and right edges; and

wherein the middle portion is substantially rectangular; and

wherein the upper edge slopes upwardly from the middle portion of the elastic member toward the left and right end portions thereof; and

wherein the lower edge slopes upwardly from the middle portion of the elastic member toward the left and right end portions thereof; and

means integrated into the left end and right end portions for enabling releasable attachment of the end portions to each other to form the elastic member into a loop;

wherein said left and right end portion of the elastic member project upwardly away from said middle portion, and wherein, upon securing the tensioning device about the one or more spaced-apart clothing straps, the clothing straps are drawn inwardly toward each other medially in a manner preventing twisting of the straps.

Claim 21: (Cancelled)

Claim 22: (New)

The clothing strap tensioning device of Claim 20, wherein the length of the middle portion is approximately equal to the combined lengths of the left and right end portions.

Claim 23: (New)

The clothing strap tensioning device of Claim 20, wherein the left and right edges are substantially parallel.

Claim 24: (New)

The clothing strap tensioning device of Claim 20, wherein the elastic member is slidable along the length of the clothing straps when the elastic member forms the loop with the left and right end portions.

Claim 25: (New)

The clothing strap tensioning device of Claim 20, wherein the elastic member has an increased transverse width along corresponding segments of the left and right end portions adjacent to the middle portion.

Claim 26: (New)

The clothing strap tensioning device of Claim 20, wherein the elastic member is affixed to the clothing straps.

Claim 27: (New)

A clothing strap tensioning device, comprising:  
an elastic member having a substantially rectangular middle portion;  
a left end portion coplanar with the middle portion, wherein the left end portion defines a first upper edge, a first lower edge, and a left edge; and  
wherein the first upper and lower edges slope upwardly from the middle portion to the left edge;  
a right end portion coplanar with the middle and left end portions, wherein the right end portion defines a second upper edge, a second lower edge, and a right edge; and  
wherein the second upper and lower edges slope upwardly from the middle portion to the right edge; and  
a releasably attachable element integrated into the left and right end portions for engaging the left and right end portions to form the elastic member into a loop; and  
wherein, upon securing the tensioning device about one or more spaced-apart clothing straps, the clothing straps are drawn inwardly toward each other medially in a manner preventing twisting of the straps.